



PATHWAY TO BECOMING A HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION

Presented by the HSI Task Force 2022-23



CAL POLY
Office of University
Diversity & Inclusion

VISION

Our vision is to become a Hispanic-Serving Institution that is known for its intentional, innovative, and expansive commitment to the success, empowerment, and achievement of the Latinx community at Cal Poly. We aspire to be a model for other polytechnic institutions seeking to serve Latinx students and advance equity and racial justice in higher education.

MISSION

At Cal Poly, our mission is to become a Hispanic-Serving Institution that is committed to providing diverse curricular and co-curricular experiences that reflect the cultural and intellectual richness of the Latinx community. We aim to develop culturally responsive teaching practices, integrate Latinx scholarship throughout all disciplines, and expand opportunities for students to engage in research, service learning, study abroad, and learn by doing opportunities that promote social change.

VALUES

STUDENT SUCCESS

For Cal Poly, becoming an HSI is more than just meeting a numerical quota, it is about being an institution that equitably yields, retains, and graduates all students.

HOLISTIC SENSE OF BELONGING

We are committed to cultivating a holistic sense of belonging that empowers the Latinx community to fulfill their unlimited potential.

EXPANSIVE CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCES

Our ability to ensure that Latinx students, staff, and faculty have enriched educational, professional, and social experiences is essential to our ability to be a premier polytechnic institution.





GOALS

1

Empowered Equity

Establish informed and inclusive recruitment/enrollment pathways for Latinx students that are tethered to robust curricular and co-curricular programs designed to support their retention, graduation, and career success.

2

Diversity-Focused and Inclusion-Driven

Expand efforts that aim to increase the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff of color, promote professional development opportunities grounded in DEI best practices, and implement policies and practices that contribute to an inclusive and culturally rich campus climate.

3

Holistic Health and Belonging

Promote a comprehensive approach to culturally responsive programs and initiatives that foster a holistic sense of belonging and wellbeing for Latinx students.

4

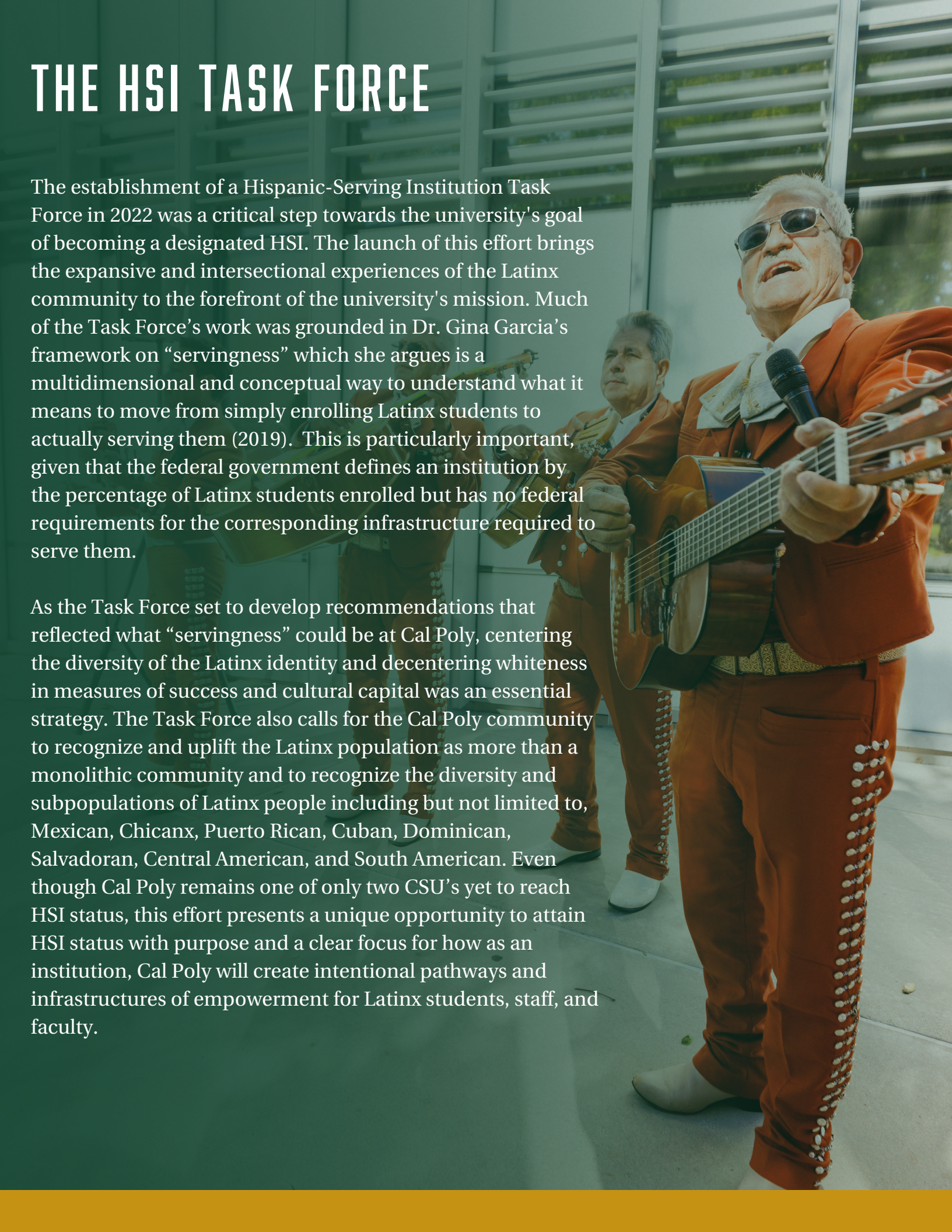
Culturally Affirming Accessibility & Engagement

Develop informed and accessible engagement and outreach strategies that are grounded in building culturally rich relationships with our Latinx communities on and off campus, increasing access to essential resources and support programs.

THE HSI TASK FORCE

The establishment of a Hispanic-Serving Institution Task Force in 2022 was a critical step towards the university's goal of becoming a designated HSI. The launch of this effort brings the expansive and intersectional experiences of the Latinx community to the forefront of the university's mission. Much of the Task Force's work was grounded in Dr. Gina Garcia's framework on "servingness" which she argues is a multidimensional and conceptual way to understand what it means to move from simply enrolling Latinx students to actually serving them (2019). This is particularly important, given that the federal government defines an institution by the percentage of Latinx students enrolled but has no federal requirements for the corresponding infrastructure required to serve them.

As the Task Force set to develop recommendations that reflected what "servingness" could be at Cal Poly, centering the diversity of the Latinx identity and decentering whiteness in measures of success and cultural capital was an essential strategy. The Task Force also calls for the Cal Poly community to recognize and uplift the Latinx population as more than a monolithic community and to recognize the diversity and subpopulations of Latinx people including but not limited to, Mexican, Chicanx, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Salvadoran, Central American, and South American. Even though Cal Poly remains one of only two CSU's yet to reach HSI status, this effort presents a unique opportunity to attain HSI status with purpose and a clear focus for how as an institution, Cal Poly will create intentional pathways and infrastructures of empowerment for Latinx students, staff, and faculty.





BECOMING AN HSI AT CAL POLY

SERVINGNESS

is the foundational framework for becoming an HSI at Cal Poly.

2026

is the year Cal Poly is projected to achieve HSI status.

21.1%

reflects the 2022 Cal Poly student population who have reported identifying as Latinx.

17

Task Force members worked to create the HSI recommendations representing students, staff, faculty, and administrators.

40 ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES

were created spanning across all divisions on campus.

OVER \$60,000

was committed to HSI efforts by the Office of University Diversity and Inclusion in 2022-23.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Research and best practices were woven into overall processes and recommendations. The task force met monthly from September 2022 to June 2023. Dr. Gina Garcia met with the Task Force in September to provide strategic direction on the role that “servingsness” could play in the visioning of Cal Poly as an HSI. In May Dr. Garcia returned to Cal Poly and conducted a study session with the Task Force to review recommendations and provide essential feedback.

In Winter and Spring terms the Task Force co-chairs conducted focus group sessions with Latinx staff, faculty, and students to identify current needs and priorities with the Cal Poly Latinx community. A survey was also created in both Spanish and English to gain greater qualitative data to inform the development of the recommendation document. 10 recommendation areas were established with more than 40 essential strategies which provide the campus with practical and operational tactics to implement the overarching recommendations.

1 Establish and Fund Staff Positions Aimed at Advancing HSI Initiatives

- Develop staff positions with specific expertise and/or experience in working with the Latinx community (such as academic advisors, counselors, Transfer Center coordinators, Housing staff, and researchers).
- Follow up the HSI Task Force with an HSI implementation team in 2023 (a small group of professionals focused on the implementing and monitoring of these recommendations and strategies).
- Establish a Director of Latinx/HSI strategies and programs.



2

Expand Pipeline and Yield Programs to Support the Recruitment and Enrollment of Latinx Students

- Expand pipeline programs that include access to mentorship, internships, Learn by Doing Labs, and college readiness workshops for Latinx students.
- Increase our presence in Latinx communities, K-12 schools, and Latinx centered college readiness fairs/events across the state to increase awareness of Cal Poly and change the narrative around our campus values of inclusion and equity.
- Assess and augment current community focused and campus-wide yield events (e.g., Open House and PolyCultural Weekend, etc.) for barriers to participation for first-gen, low income, students and families of color.
- Increase campus wide collaborative recruitment and yield strategies focused on serving Latinx students, especially at partner high schools and community colleges in local communities in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Monterey and other surrounding CA counties.
- Prioritize Allan Hancock College (AHC) and Cuesta College for Latinx outreach, recruitment and yield transfer programming.
- Create partnerships with Santa Maria Joint Unified High School district and community to increase Cal Poly events and programming for our local Latinx students.
- Prioritize partner high schools in the cities of Salinas and Santa Maria for Latinx outreach, recruitment, and yielding high school level programming.



3 Enhance Programs and Policies that Support the Recruitment and Retention of Faculty and Staff of Color

- Find funding sources to support and expand our new cyclical university cluster hire program.
- Establish a staff DEI cluster hire program focused on staff positions that seek applicants with expertise and/or experience working with marginalized communities.
- Develop a staff-focused DEI hiring guide to operate in parallel with the current faculty DEI hiring guide.
- Enhance resources for recruiting, retaining, and professional development of first-gen and marginalized faculty and staff (including housing, research funds, and community building etc.)
- Continued expansion of existing DEI focused staff and faculty professional development programs and orientation/onboarding efforts (e.g., Building Towards Equity faculty professional development program, Examining Whiteness, Transfer Inclusion Training, etc.)
- Establish recommendations and policies to include opportunities to express DEI related service, research, and teaching efforts as part of the Retention Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) process and work to train peer review committees to read and assess RPT documents through an equity lens.
- Increase visibility of Latinx scholars working at Cal Poly through curricular and co-curricular programs like the Teach-In, State of events, and Heritage month programming etc.



4 Expand and Enhance Culturally Responsive Programming and Support Services that Foster a Sense of Belonging and Community for Latinx Students

- Hire additional staff to support Latinx students which could include a reimagining of the La CASA and Dream Center Staffing Structure.
- Create pathways for collaboration and shared assessments between curricular and co-curricular culturally relevant programming.
- Increase programming that addresses the growing need for professional development and paid internships for low-income and undocumented students and leverages campus, community, and industry partnerships.
- Create civic engagement opportunities with local schools, industry partners, and equity centered non-profit organizations to improve community partnerships, to center student voices and needs in decision-making spaces and advocacy efforts.
- Increase strategies that center Latinx students across entire University Housing footprint and bolster Latinx Scholars community in to provide an affirming residential learning community through intentional Resident Advisor (RA) placement, Latinx-centric programming, and strategic partnerships for culturally relevant student support.
- Improve Cal Poly La CASA website and the Latinx Resource Guide to include a more comprehensive overview of relevant programming, Latinx student organizations, and campus support services (include photos, videos, list Latinx/Spanish speaking staff, etc.).



5

Strengthen Wellbeing and Basic Needs Support Services Addressing Equity Gaps for Latinx Students

- ▶ Partner with Campus Health & Wellbeing and La CASA to generate funding streams and create a satellite food pantry at La CASA that is accessible and offers both nutritious and culturally relevant food items.
- ▶ Support and expand culturally relevant programming centered on topics such as financial literacy and holistic health like the newly established Promotores program.
- ▶ Enhance Campus Health & Wellbeing's outreach and engagement programs to have offerings rooted in the needs and experiences of Latinx students.
- ▶ Increase Campus Health and Wellbeing's presence at parent/supporter events during SLO Days, including offerings/resources in both Spanish and English.
- ▶ Improve Cal Poly Latinx Resource Guide to include a more comprehensive overview of available wellbeing and basic needs support services while making the page more interactive for students interested in accessing counseling services, the food pantry, and other resources.



6

Expand Academic Programs that Serve and Support the Advancement of Latinx Students in STEM

- Expand and create successful programs and resources for supporting Latinx students in STEM, such as the Multicultural Engineering Program in the College of Engineering and the Multicultural Center in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Science.
- Survey alumni and current students about the strengths and needs to succeed in STEM programs, such as specialized (for instance, Spanish-speaking) tutors and lab/ learning assistants, support centers, Latinx STEM-major affinity groups, etc.
- Identify, support, and create “servingness” (Garcia) programs and initiatives to support Latinx (and all) students in STEM courses (e.g. Nuestra Ciencia Program in the College of Science and Math, the College of Engineering’s Equity Laptop Program), and dedicate funds in every college to underwrite “Learn by Doing” internship, travel, and international study programs for students with financial need.

7

Increase Opportunities for Latinx Parent and Supporter Engagement & Participation

- As previously stated, assess and augment university wide programs like PolyCultural Weekend, Open House, and Mustang Family Weekend to center increased engagement and accessibility of Latinx parents and supporters.
- Increase financial assistance, organize transportation, and partner with local hotels to offer discounts for our families to ease the financial burden of visiting campus. In addition, comparable virtual events could increase access.

8

Legitimize Bilingualism & Linguistic Diversity

- Create infrastructure for developing culturally relevant communication in Spanish.
- Review recruitment, onboarding, and employment processes to identify opportunities to expand Spanish translation services for essential information.
- Increased Spanish-language outreach from Admissions, Student Affairs, University Housing, and the Financial Aid & Scholarships office in the form of virtual resources, brochures, videos, Spanish-language campus tours and regular informational sessions.
- Embed a question on Cal Poly employment application that asks about languages spoken and written and about oral proficiency. From those willing to participate create a “language resource team” of staff and faculty willing to provide translation services and appropriately compensate the staff who participate.

9

Develop Intentional Alumni & Donor Engagement that Aims to Support the Advancement of Latinx Initiatives at Cal Poly

- Establish and identify programs and events that bring alumni and donors together with Latinx students, faculty, and staff to be in community and discuss opportunities for collaboration.
- Partner with the Cal Poly Latinx Alumni Chapter to establish an annual scholarship for students who have shown an outstanding commitment to the Latinx community at Cal Poly while maintaining a high level of academic excellence.
- Identify funding opportunities and create targeted fundraising campaigns that raise awareness and support for Latinx initiatives.



10

Increase Latinx Cultural Representation through the Arts & Across Campus Facilities

- Partner with Cal Poly Arts and SLO Museum of Art to expand Latinx artists track and develop program structure for community engagement opportunities with artists. This effort currently aligns with Cal Poly Arts 30-20-10 commitment.
- Work collaboratively with the appropriate offices to bring a Latinx centered mural to a prominent place on campus.
- Encourage the participation of Latinx students, staff, and faculty on the Corporation board to advocate for increased Latinx representation across all dining options.
- Collaborate with the City of SLO to identify key opportunities to center the Latinx community in various forms including but not limited to SLOMA, City funded public art projects, SLO Film Festival, and the Farmers Market.
- Identify opportunities to bring Latinx-centered music, art, and dance to spaces across campus during multiple times a year that expands cultural representation beyond La CASA and Cal Poly Arts.





SERVINGNESS IN PRACTICE REQUIRES ALL OF US

The establishment of the HSI Task Force was one step in continuing the work to address equity gaps, center the experiences and needs of the Latinx community, and to develop a framework for what becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution can look like at Cal Poly. Cal Poly students exhibit a deep commitment to excellence and a will to overcome challenges in the pursuit of their unlimited potential. The 2023 Latinos in Agriculture student president often speaks the phrase “Donde estemos plantados creceremos” meaning wherever we are planted, we will grow. The HSI recommendations reflect a commitment at Cal Poly, to ensure that our Latinx community has the necessary support, resources, and community to not only grow but to thrive.

The recommendations will serve as guiding pathways for the campus community to develop their own set of Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely (SMART) goals for implementation, collaborations, and assessment measures to aid in our collective effort to become an HSI. The Office of University Diversity and Inclusion committed over \$60,000 in 2022-23 for HSI initiatives and has begun seeking additional funding sources to expand efforts into 2023-24. Through University wide investments, Cal Poly will transform our campus into a Hispanic-Serving Institution that is known for its intentional, innovative, and expansive commitment to the success, empowerment, and achievement of the Latinx community. Together we can become a model for other polytechnic institutions seeking to serve Latinx students and advance equity and racial justice in higher education.



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